

# **Assessment of the National Mediation Board's Interest-Based Bargaining Training Program**

**October, 2000**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Data Collection Methods .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overview .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Interview Respondents Demographics .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Survey Respondent Demographics .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Review of the Literature .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Telephone Questionnaires .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>NMB Questionnaire .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Participant Questionnaire .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Written Survey .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Confidentiality .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Dissemination of Results .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Limitations .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Results .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Baseline Data Results .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Vision .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Short-Term Goals .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Long-Term Goals .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Success .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Barriers .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Participant Interview and Survey Results .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Training Content/Transfer of Learning .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Direct Impact .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Indirect Impact .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Changes in Perceptions .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## **Executive Summary**

The assessment team comprised of Rachel Barbour, Dawn Gresham and Suman Kapur of the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution was first asked to conduct an assessment of the National Mediation Board's Interest Based Bargaining program in mid-summer, 2000. The team is pleased to submit this final assessment report to the NMB. This report details the results and contains an analysis of the telephone interviews of six NMB officials, twelve past participants, as well as thirty seven responses to a written survey sent to past participants. Overall, this assessment elicited many thoughts regarding the IBB program's strengths, areas for improvement and its future direction.

Interviews with NMB officials highlighted the goals of the IBB program and indicated a great deal of commonality. In the short-term, the most common goals were around increasing the IBB skills of participants, including communication, problem-solving and better listening skills. Many identified the long-term goals as institutionalizing IBB processes into unions and management increased comfort with the IBB process within unions. Criteria for success included the increased use of IBB to resolve problems, acceptance of IBB by the parties and reaching good agreements quickly.

The analysis of the data from the telephone interviews and the survey details participant responses in four sections: Training Content/Transfer of Learning, Direct Impact, Indirect Impact, and Changes in Perceptions. The assessment team's observations of the program also adds another dimension to the analysis. Each section illustrates some positive change regarding use of IBB skills, the affect on the negotiation process, and how the parties view each other. Each section also shows some area for improvement, most of which is directly or indirectly related to longer- term transfer of learning. For example, 89.2% of the survey respondents noted that the IBB training is clear and understandable, and no respondent in either the interviews or the survey said that they would make major, substantive changes to the program. However, less than 50% of survey respondents indicated that they analyze the issues more or that their communication skills had improved since the training. These discrepancies are discussed in the analysis and indicate some areas for improvement in the IBB program and long-term strategy.

# Data Collection Methods

## Overview

The primary goals of the assessment project were twofold: first, to determine the level of success of the Interest-Based Bargaining training program and second, to gather and analyze data, regarding the impact the IBB training has had on individuals and the negotiation process. Essentially, this study aspired to answer, is the IBB program working for its customers? The assessment consisted of a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in order to effectively extract the most pertinent information. The telephone interviews in particular were designed to elicit participants' stories and experiences using IBB, and ideas for improving the IBB training program.

To accomplish this, the assessment team designed three instruments: one for interviewing NMB officials, one for interviewing past participants, and a written survey that was mailed to 107 past participants. The NMB interviewees consisted of six NMB officials who were identified by the Chief of Staff's office. Twelve past participant interviews included eight members of management: three were from the rail industry, five were from the air industry, six were men and two were women. On the union side, four interviews were conducted: three were from the rail industry, one was from the air industry, three were men and one was a woman. Of the entire group, four participated in the training in 1998, three in 1999 and five in 2000. Five of the respondents had participated in IBB trainings two or more times. Experience in negotiating ranged, with management respondents having negotiated professionally from 2-29 years, and union respondents having negotiated from 10-31 years.

## Interview Respondents Demographics

Number of Times Respondents Have Been Through Traditional Mediation with an NMB Mediator		
0		16.70%
1		25%
2		0%
3		25%
4		8.30%
5 or more		25%

Number of Times Respondents Have Participated in NMB's IBB Training Program		
0		0%
1		58.40%
2		8.30%
3		16.70%
4		8.30%
5 or more		8.30%

Year(s) Respondents Participated in the NMB IBB Training Program		
1997		16.70%
1998		8.30%
1999		25%
2000		41.70%
Multiple		8.30%

Respondents' Affiliation		
Carrier		66.70%
Union		33.30%

Respondents' Sex		
Male		75%
Female		25%

## Survey Respondent Demographics

Number of Times Respondents Participated in Traditional Mediation with the NMB		
0		19%
1		37.80%
2		13.50%
3		2.70%
4		5.40%
5 or more		21.60%

Respondents' Affiliation		
Carrier		43.20%
Union		43.20%
Blank		13.60%

Number of Times Respondents Participated in Negotiations After the IBB Training Program		
0		0%
1		56.80%
2		16.20%
3		10.80%
4		2.70%
5 or more		13.50%

Respondents' Age		
18-24		0%
25-34		10.80%
35-44		10.80%
45-54		56.80%
55+		21.60%

Respondents' Gender		
Male		86.50%
Female		13.50%

Respondents' Race		
White		89.20%
African American		0%
Hispanic		5.40%
Asian or Pacific Islander		5.40%
Other		0.00%

## Review of the Literature

As a first step in designing the process, the assessment team reviewed selected literature on the evaluation of conflict resolution processes. Given that no evaluation had been conducted of the IBB program, this brief review helped determine the appropriate course of action. A particularly useful article was *Evaluation in Conflict Resolution Training and Practice* by Marc Howard Ross and seminal texts that provided guidance in the design of instruments included *Real World Research* by Colin Robeson and *Research Methods in the Social Sciences* by Frankfurt-Nachmias and Nachmias. This brief but important review provided a grounding in assessment practices and informed subsequent steps for the assessment.

## **Telephone Questionnaires**

### **NMB Questionnaire**

In total, 18 people were interviewed: six key NMB officials and 12 past participants. Two telephone questionnaires were created using qualitative methods. The NMB Questionnaire was designed to elicit the goals and expectations of the NMB to establish baseline data from which to measure against responses from participants. The questions were also designed to elicit the thoughts and feelings of those who have been most involved with the IBB program. This data would be used to then measure whether the IBB program has been successful, in the eyes of the NMB and to see if there were differences in opinion among NMB officials regarding the goals and success of the program.

The questions were divided into five categories:

- Vision
- Goals
- Definitions of and criteria for success
- Training difficulties
- Miscellaneous

### **Participant Questionnaire**

The IBB Participant Telephone Questionnaire was divided into six categories in order to elicit participant's definitions of success, the type of impact the IBB training had, positively or negatively, and how widely participants are using IBB skills. More generally, the questionnaire was designed to elicit information regarding the depth of change, including views of the "other," and relationships between the parties. The categories of this questionnaire were:

- Basic demographic data
- Training content
- Direct impact
- Indirect impact
- Changes in perceptions
- Further trainings or skill-building areas

Two pilot interviews were conducted to ensure the accuracy and flow of the questions. Only minor changes to clarify a few questions were made.

Participants were selected using a systematic sampling format. In other words, a list was generated of all participants and every 10th person was selected. This methodology ensured that the sampling was random.

## **Written Survey**

A written, quantitative survey was also developed and sent to 107 of the approximately 300 past IBB training participants. The questions were designed to determine the transfer of learning, change, success and attitudes of the participants regarding the IBB program. The written survey was also designed to provide quantitative data to synthesize with telephone interview responses. Thirty-seven past participants, or 35%, completed the survey. The surveys were anonymous in order to ensure confidentiality.

## **Confidentiality**

The sources of information in this report are confidential, which was emphasized throughout the assessment process. By doing so, we hoped to encourage more candid and honest responses by eliminating potential repercussions. In order to honor the assurance of confidentiality, we will identify individuals only as rail: management or union, and air: management or union.

## **Dissemination of Results**

It is our experience that when someone participates in an assessment, they want to know the results and follow-up that may occur. In the course of the interviews, many did request some type of summary report. We recommend that the Board mail a summary of findings to all who received the survey and post it on their website given the limitations discussed below.

## **Limitations**

Unfortunately, several constraints limited the size of our samples. First and foremost, poor record keeping prevented approximately two-thirds of the total number of past IBB participants from being included in the study. Some of the training sign-in sheets were missing or illegible. In addition, given the transient nature of the industries, many phone numbers and addresses were no longer correct.

Timing and availability for interviews also proved to be somewhat difficult. August, when many of the interviews were conducted, is a peak vacation time. Also, many of the participants have very busy schedules, and did not return repeated calls. Others who were reached simply apologized and said they were unable to schedule a time based on their schedule.

Lastly, it is important to note the limits and potential biases of survey responses. When interpreting the data, it is important to consider that studies have shown that those with a higher level of satisfaction are sometimes more motivated to return them than those with a lower level of satisfaction. We have addressed this potential bias by conducting telephone interviews and making observations of one training program.

# Results

## Baseline Data Results

Interviews with officials of the NMB determined that there is a great deal of complementarity and commonality among the leadership and those who run the IBB program regarding the vision, goals, criteria for success and stumbling blocks of the IBB program. Aside from providing baseline data, these interviews also demonstrate a well-defined, commonly shared perspective.

### Vision

In five to ten years, respondents stated they would like IBB to be fully integrated into the bargaining process and into union and management interactions, thus increasing demand for the IBB program. Agreements would be more easily reached with stronger outcomes. They also want to see a cultural change within these organizations, allowing for more openness to new approaches in bargaining, thus allowing a shift away from adversarial processes. Several respondents mentioned a desire to make the bargaining process more effective and efficient, therefore dropping the overall number of cases that would require mediation. Specific to the IBB training, several respondents mentioned the need to keep the IBB training program fresh and energized, and to have all mediators capable of training parties in IBB. One hoped to see the use of computer software that enables participants to write anonymous comments (when brainstorming, for example) that would be projected on a screen at the front of the room in a training. However, this might keep people's attention on their computers, rather than developing the personal relationships that is required for IBB to succeed.

### Short-Term Goals

The majority of short-term goals related to skill-building. Respondents stated they want participants to leave the training with a clear understanding of the IBB model, better listening and communication skills, and better problem-solving skills. Overall, as one person stated, the parties should learn that they "don't have to hold their cards so close to their chests" in the negotiating process.

### Long-Term Goals

Respondents also had similar long-term goals for IBB participants. The most common goals relate to structural change, such as institutionalizing IBB within unions and companies/carriers and behavioral or attitudinal changes of the parties. Others stated that they want participants to have an increased comfort level with the process so that the parties will use IBB rather than resorting to grievance mediation. Lastly, some respondents mentioned that they want the participants to feel comfortable and confident with the process and skills, and that they can effectively use IBB to get good agreements.

### Success

Questions regarding criteria for success of the IBB program elicited a range of complimentary responses. Most respondents talked about the successful use of IBB in the negotiation process, and specifically in reaching agreements. Respondents also stated that success would mean that participants would have an increased comfort level using IBB skills, and would have improved



relationships and better communication with their counterparts. Many respondents also mentioned acceptability of IBB by the parties. Other criteria for success included an increased comfort level with IBB among mediators, and continued flexibility and adaptability of the IBB program to ensure that new ideas and material continue to get integrated into the IBB training program.

Overall, respondents felt that some of the short-term goals have been met, especially skill building. Many felt that the design and content of the training are strong, and that the delivery of the trainings has been going well.

### **Barriers**

The clearest consensus among the interviews was regarding barriers to success. All respondents stated that the most prominent barrier to overcome is the organizational culture of unions and management. The organizational culture of both, but particularly unions, was defined as inherently mistrustful of the other. This clearly affects the bargaining process, and constituents often want to see that their representatives are being "tough" on their counterpart. If the bargaining committees are perceived as being "soft" on their counterpart, even if they may get a good agreement, the culture of the constituencies may prevent that agreement from being ratified. As one might expect, difficulty of getting over past relationships and contentious interactions were also cited.

## **Participant Interview and Survey Results**

### **Training Content/Transfer of Learning**

The most positive responses in both the telephone interviews and written surveys were in these categories. 89.2% of the survey respondents reported that the IBB training is clear and understandable. The most important skills that the majority of telephone respondents learned in the training include: focusing on facts instead of emotion, listening, laying out interests of both sides, and being able to see the other's perspective.

Responses were not consistent regarding what, if anything should be cut out of the training. Some stated that role-plays (particularly the one about animals) should be cut, while others said that role-plays should not be cut, but instead modified to include more realistic negotiation issues. No respondent indicated that any major, substantive changes to the training were needed.

Survey respondents were asked to rate their perceived importance of IBB concepts and skills. The data was analyzed according to respondents' affiliation and by the year training was attended. Of the survey responses, airline unions ranked the majority of concepts and skills learned in the training as slightly more important than did railroad unions. The airline unions ranked "joint problem solving" as "very important"; whereas the railroad unions ranked this concept between "neutral" and "important". This discrepancy may be due to more adversarial relationships between railroad unions and management, which could decrease the perceived importance of collaboration.

Overall, members of management rated IBB concepts and skills higher than union representatives. Furthermore, airline union representatives rated them higher than railroad union representatives.

These discrepancies between management and unions in general, or between airline unions and rail unions could be attributable to varying levels of education and respondents' cultural background. Research has shown that cultural background, including class differences, impacts learning styles and motivation (Silverman & Casazza, 2000), which raises the question, are railroad union representatives as motivated to learn about the IBB process as airline union representatives to begin with?

The importance of "body language" was the only concept ranked below "important" by both groups. This could be attributable to deeply ingrained bargaining practices of not revealing thoughts or reactions through body language.

The data also revealed a significant shift in rating among survey respondents who had participated in IBB training over the years. There was an overall decline in perceived importance of concepts and skills by respondents who took the training in 2000 and in multiple years. Those who took the training in 1997 and 1998 rated 67% of the concepts and skills above "4" or "important." 1999 training participants rated 83.3% of the concepts and skills above "4." However, there was a significant decline in 2000. Those who attended IBB training in 2000 rated only 41.7% of the concepts and skills above "4." Training participants who attended multiple trainings from 1998 to 2000 also rated only 41.7% of the concepts and skills above "4."

There are a number of factors that could have influenced this decline in perceived importance of IBB concepts and skills. Various changes in the IBB training design and implementation that may have taken place is one. For example, if trainings were more experiential before, this would help to explain the decreased importance of concepts and skills. Even though the experiential component has been called "touchy-feely," a greater emphasis on this component might have transferred the learning points more effectively than presentation-oriented training. This warrants further discussion regarding whether specific exercises or experiential learning in general is considered to be "touchy-feely." Another factor that merits further examination by the NMB is how training styles have differed over the years.

An illustration of lowest- and highest-ranked IBB concepts, categorized by survey respondents' affiliation and when they attended training, is provided below.

**Table 1: Survey Respondents' Lowest- and Highest-Ranked IBB Concepts and Skills  
(Lowest And Highest Ratings Are Average Figures)**

Breakdown of Respondents	Lowest Rating	Concept/Skill	Highest Rating	Concept/Skill
<b>Members of Management</b>	3	Paraphrasing	4.44	Gaining mutual satisfaction
<b>Members of Airline Management</b>	3.5	Body language	4.5	Gaining mutual satisfaction
<b>Rail Union Members</b>	2.75	Body language	4	Focusing on issues
	2.75	Paraphrasing	4	Demonstrating flexibility
			4	Active listening
<b>Airline Union Members</b>	2.86	Body language	5	Joint problem solving
<b>Attended IBB Training in 1997</b>	2	Focusing on issues	5	Joint problem solving
			5	Consensus building
			5	Demonstrating flexibility
			5	Active listening
<b>Attended IBB Training in 1998</b>	2.4	Body language	4.4	Joint problem solving
<b>Attended IBB Training in 1999</b>	3.54	Body language	4.73	Joint problem solving
<b>Attended IBB Training in 2000</b>	2.77	Body language	4.15	Focusing on issues
<b>Attended IBB Training Multiple Years</b>				
	2.43	Body language	4.58	Joint problem solving

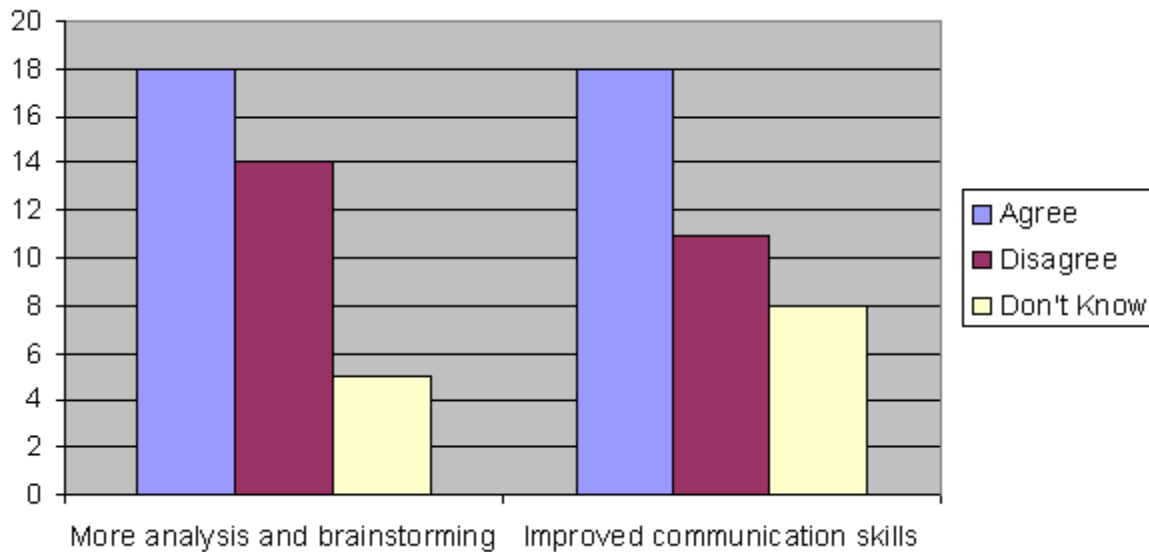
### **Direct Impact**

The assessment team posed questions on the survey and during interviews that were designed to elicit how the IBB process has made a direct impact on training participants, the negotiating process, and negotiating outcomes. On the individual level, less than 50% of survey respondents indicated that they analyze the issues more or that their communication skills have improved since the IBB training. These findings corroborate our observations that the training is designed more toward a presentation style and less than an experiential, interactive workshop.

83% of management and union interview respondents stated that they use IBB skills, primarily problem solving, in other areas of work or with family members. One member of management said that s/he does not use IBB skills with his/her co-workers, and one recently retired union representative said the question was not relevant. 73% of survey respondents reported that they use IBB skills on the job outside of contract negotiations, while 16.2% responded that they do not, 5.4% said that they do not know if they are, and 5.4% did not answer the question. It is interesting to note the difference between those who see improvement in their skills (less than 50%) versus those who say they use their skills (83%). This indicates that a significant number past participants are using their skills, but they just do not see improvement in their skills or that they are using them more than before the training.

Most interview respondents stated that the IBB program had changed the way they negotiate. Subsequent to the training, participants' negotiating styles became "collaborative," "more demanding in looking for the 'why'," more communicative, and less rigid. Those whose negotiating styles did not change attributed it to an absence of mutual commitment, or a lack of perceived opportunity in the workplace.

**TABLE 2: Direct Impact of IBB Training on Survey Respondents' Analytic & Brainstorming, and Communication Skills**



As will be discussed below, both survey and interview respondents stated that the IBB process has created a shift in the atmosphere and the dynamics of negotiations; however, this shift is temporary at times. Further details and analysis are provided in the section on *Changes in Perceptions*.

In analyzing whether IBB training promotes successful negotiation outcomes, the assessment team examined number of tentative agreements achieved without mediation, whether the IBB negotiation process enabled reaching an agreement quicker, and agreement ratification rate. Approximately 30% of those interviewed said that they had reached a tentative agreement without the need for mediation. In three cases, the parties were still working on contract negotiations.

The data varied pertaining to whether the IBB process affected how quickly agreements were reached, because many were still in the ratification process. Interestingly, of those who had achieved tentative agreements, 25% perceive that the IBB process takes less time due to more productive dialogue between the parties, while 25% believe that a greater period of time is spent following the IBB process for the same reason.

30% of respondents, two union representatives and two company members, had achieved ratification. Perceived fairness was not reported to have played a key role in the ratification process on either side.

### **Indirect Impact**

100% of survey respondents reported that membership or management is aware of the IBB process, although the degree of understanding is unclear. This may be the result of some training participants having difficulties explaining the process to others. 78.4% of survey respondents noted that membership or management supports the process. Of the telephone respondents, four members of

management stated that their associates have a positive view of the IBB process due to favorable results and mutual appreciation of the process (union and management). The other four cited difficulty with "pay issues" and "mistrust" as reasons for their associates' negative perspectives of the process. One union representative reported that his/her associates look favorably upon the IBB process because "they believe it to be a good negotiating technique," in that it has the potential to move negotiations along quicker. Other union representatives said that distrust for management made union membership skeptical of the process. Another stated that his/her associates have not yet formed an opinion of the IBB process because a tentative agreement has not been reached.

Overall, the data show that over 50% of all respondents have shared details from the IBB training with others in their professional and personal lives. 73% of survey respondents reported that they have shared the IBB process with their co-workers, family members, or friends. 58.3% of those interviewed have shared information from the training in their workplace five were members of management and two were union representatives. Those who have not shared concepts and skills from the workshop cited multiple reasons. First, some did not see a reason to do so based on an absence of opportunities to use the IBB process. Second, another expressed disappointment with the process. Finally, another expressed that s/he and the other bargaining committee members did not know how to explain the IBB process to others.

Interview respondents received mixed reactions from their associates who have not participated in the IBB training. One member of management reported that his/her associates listened with an open mind, and are open to discussion and modification. Another said that negative feedback was given, based on prior knowledge of the IBB process. Three members of management who recently retired or changed positions said they could not answer the question. One union representative stated his/her understanding is that union membership does not have a problem with the IBB process. Another union representative has received mixed reactions from union membership. On the one hand, some believe that the process is worthwhile, while others do not due to difficulties with trusting management. Yet another union representative reported a more neutral perception of the IBB process--union members are not concerned about the process being utilized. "Frankly, they don't care as long as negotiations are taking place." These mixed reactions may indicate a need for further education of constituencies.

### **Changes in Perceptions**

Two areas stand out regarding changes in respondent's perceptions. First, nearly all interview respondents stated that prior to the IBB training, negotiations were "anger-based," closed, and confrontational.

Most respondents said that the IBB training improved subsequent negotiations by making the process "more palatable," informal, and that it created a level playing field. However, many also commented that it was difficult to overcome ingrained bargaining habits and that it was easy to fall back into traditional bargaining. This return to traditional methods could be attributable to a lack of practice with IBB skills, which would contribute toward internalizing the skills. Respondents also reported that minimal guidance after the IBB training made it more difficult to stay with IBB. Some questioned whether it was possible to use IBB with contentious or zero-sum issues, such as compensation.

The fact that participants are identifying certain issues as zero-sum indicates that they have not fully absorbed or "bought into" the IBB model. Even issues such as compensation, which are perceived as all or nothing, can cease to be viewed as such when parties delve deeper into issues using the IBB process. As adversaries gain a better understanding of the other's perspective, they may disagree, however new insights may bring about more flexibility and open-mindedness. However, this requires a level of information sharing and trust that may not exist on sensitive issues like compensation. Participants also mentioned that negotiations surrounding zero-sum issues frequently break down or return to traditional bargaining practices without the guidance of an NMB facilitator or mediator.

Second, 54.1% of survey respondents reported that the relationship with their counterpart had improved. 35.1% said that the relationship had not improved and 10.8% stated that they did not know if the relationship had improved. Virtually all union representatives interviewed reported that their relationship with their counterpart had shifted slightly in negotiations after the IBB training because of the nature of the IBB process. Members of management noted fewer cases of improved relations. This may be due to a perceived imbalance of power, which impacts the priority of issues on each side. Whereas "lower power groups" are frequently in favor of creating a shift in the structural relationship, parties that have enjoyed a power advantage are in a stronger position to pursue their interests during negotiations, commonly: to maintain the status quo (Rouhana & Korper, 1997. p. 5).

One assessment team member had a conversation with several union representatives following the IBB training on October 17th and 18th, at which time certain sentiments were expressed that affirm how an imbalance of power impacts relationships. The assessment team member was informed that union members commonly feel like "step children" based on the way that company management treats them as "second-class citizens." The union representatives were eager for the story of their hardships to be heard, which is not uncommon when one party feels like the underdog. This might warrant further exploration on the part of the NMB.

In cases where the relationship between union and management did not change, some respondents said that they see the potential for a shift. However, several respondents did note that while the relationships had changed somewhat positively, the negotiation process still broke down and they reverted to traditional bargaining. As mentioned previously, this may be due to a lack of experience and practice with IBB skills and processes.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements surrounding their perception of the IBB process. Their responses are illustrated in Tables 3 and 4 below:

**Table 3: Survey Respondents' Perceptions of the IBB Process  
(Average Responses)**

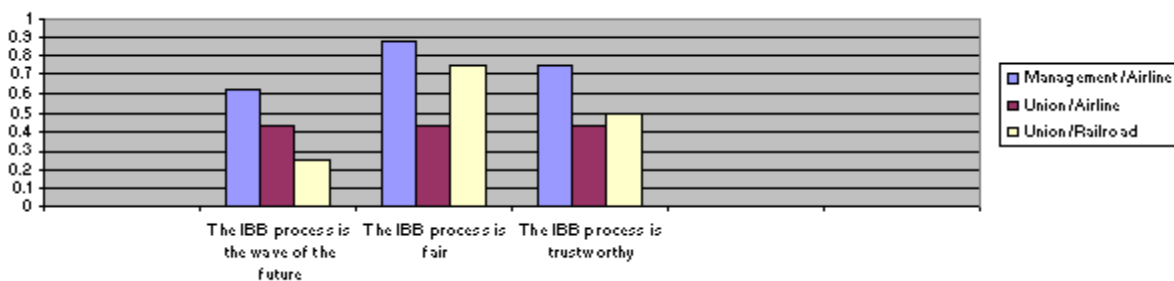
	Management/Air	Union/RR	Union/Air	1997	1998	1999	2000	Multiple
The IBB process is better than traditional mediation	3.88	3.5	3.66	3	3.6	4	3.31	3.71
I am able to deal with my co-workers and counterparts more cooperatively since participating in the IBB training	3.38	4	3.29	3	3.4	3.55	3.31	3.14
I believe that it is necessary to be confrontational when bargaining	1.63	1.75	1.71	2	1.8	1.18	1.69	2.14

**1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Somewhat Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Somewhat Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree**

In addition, 78.4% of survey respondents expressed that they believe the IBB process is fair, and 56.8% perceive that it is trustworthy. 43.3% agree that the IBB process is the wave of the future. A breakdown of their responses by union versus management indicates some difference of opinion, with air management ranking highest in agreeing that IBB is "the wave of the future." A breakdown is provided below according to respondents' affiliation:

**Table 4: Survey Respondents' Perceptions of IBB's Future, IBB Fairness, and IBB Trustworthiness**

	Management/Airline (8 respondents total)	Union/Airline (7 respondents total)	Union/Railroad (4 respondents total)
The IBB process is the wave of the future	62.50%	42.90%	25%
The IBB process is fair	87.50%	42.90%	75%
The IBB process is trustworthy	75%	42.90%	50%



## Conclusion

Throughout the assessment process, it has been clear that the National Mediation Board is fully committed to providing the best services it can to its customers. Given that commitment, the NMB has undertaken a serious and impressive challenge to transform the way in which unions and management do business together.

Given that systems change requires a long-term strategy, the findings of this report should not be a surprise. On the one hand, participants feel generally positive about the training, but not all see improvement in their use of the skills. Some participants see a shift in relationships and note a difference in the tone of negotiations, but that has not necessarily translated into consistently better, faster agreements. Some participants think IBB can "level the playing field" yet they still conceptualize certain issues as zero-sum and are not sure that IBB is the "wave of the future." These discrepancies indicate issues with transfer of learning, and raise larger questions about buy-in and long-term impact.

It is clear that a great deal of time, thought and energy has been put into the current IBB program. The training has good content, materials, skilled trainers and a nice presentation. The data demonstrates that the training in the current format has had a certain level of impact on participants in the short-term. However, the data also suggest that the training does not necessarily maximize its potential impact to reach the NMB's long-term goal for systemic change. Further, to transform an entrenched system of bargaining, the approach must connect the participants of the two-day training with the long-term desired outcome in as tangible a way as possible. This is a clear area for further exploration and work on the part of the NMB.

The NMB is laudably attempting a systems change, and the commitment to do so is shared by those at the top of the organization and those who run the IBB program. The vision of the program is strong and positive, and it is in this spirit that we have written this report.